

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 10-14 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1 and 10 being independent.

Several editorial changes have been made to the specification. In amending the specification, the informality identified in paragraph 5 of the Office Action has been attended to.

Independent Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art. Claims 6-9 have been cancelled.

Applicants are submitting concurrently herewith a Submission of Replacement Sheets of Drawings with the following changes:

Figure 4 has been labelled "Prior Art," reference numeral "27" has been deleted in Figures 12 and 13, and reference numeral "1040" has been deleted in Figure 30.

As will be appreciated, the drawing changes attend to the objections noted in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action. In addition, the specification has been amended to delete reference to insulating member "1." Approval of the Replacement Sheets of Drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. In amending the claims as shown above, particular attention was paid to the grounds underlying this rejection as set forth in paragraphs 7a, 7c and 7d of the Office Action. Additionally, Claims 6-9 have been cancelled. Accordingly, it is submitted that all the presented claims are in full compliance with the particularity and distinctness requirement of the statute.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 2 and 11 were indicated as containing patentable subject matter. These claims remain in dependent form, however, as it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 10 are patentable in their own right for the reasons discussed below.

Claims 1 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Mitsutake JP '633 (or U.S. '715). Additionally, Claim 1 is rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Anderson '927. Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Mitsutake, Anderson or the admitted prior art. Claims 3, 4, 12 and 13 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Anderson or Mitsutake, in view of Sakamaki '304. Claims 5, 9 and 14 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Anderson or Mitsutake, in view of Iguchi '235. Finally, Claims 1, 3-10 and 12-14 were provisionally rejected on obviousness-type double patenting grounds as allegedly being unpatentable over Claims 15-17 of copending Application No. 10/622,432 in view of Mitsutake, Sakamaki and Iguchi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 of Applicants' invention relates to a method for manufacturing an image display device, and includes the steps of fixing opposite ends of a plate spacer to a first substrate while disposing the plate spacer on a surface of the first substrate such that a length of the plate spacer is parallel to the surface of the first substrate and such that at least a portion of

the plate spacer between the fixed opposite ends is in contact with the surface of the first substrate, and tightly bonding a first substrate and second substrate together through the plate spacer while disposing the second substrate to face the first substrate fixed to the plate spacer so that the spacer is arranged in between the first and second substrates. As amended, Claim 1 further sets forth a step of forming a space between the plate spacer and the surface of the first substrate so that the portion of the plate spacer between the fixed opposite ends previously in contact with the surface of the first substrate is no longer in contact with the surface of the first substrate after the process of fixing the plate spacer to the first substrate and before the process of bonding the first substrate and the second substrate together to form an image display device.

In Claim 10, a method for manufacturing an image display device includes the steps of providing a first substrate with an electron emission source, providing a second substrate having imaging means, and fixing opposite ends of a plate spacer to the first substrate while disposing the plate spacer on a surface of the first substrate such that a length of the plate spacer is parallel to a surface of the first substrate and such that at least a portion of the plate spacer between the fixed opposite ends is in contact with the surface of the first substrate. Similarly to Claim 1, Claim 10 has been amended to include the step of forming a space between the plate spacer and the surface of the first substrate so that the portion of the plate spacer previously in contact with the surface of the first substrate is no longer in contact with the surface of the first substrate. Additionally, the first substrate, the second substrate and side walls are bonded together to form a vacuum image display device.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, a high performance image display device can be manufactured.

Mitsutake relates to an electron beam apparatus that, according to the Office Action, fixes opposite ends of a plate spacer 1020 to a first substrate and tightly bonds the first substrate and a second substrate together through the plate spacer with the plate spacer fixed in between. In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Mitsutake does not teach or suggest, among other features, forming a space between the plate spacer and a surface of the substrate so that the portion of the plate spacer previously in contact with the surface of the first substrate is no longer in contact with the surface of the first substrate. Mitsutake discloses, with reference to Figure 6, a warped spacer 1020, but there is no teaching or suggestion of forming a space between the plate spacer and a surface of the substrate in the manner set forth in Applicants' claimed invention. To the contrary, the spacer 1020 shown in Figure 6 of Mitsutake is warped before it is used in the manufacturing process (see column 11, lines 40-51). Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

With respect to the Anderson patent as applied to Claim 1, a method for affixing a plurality of spacers is provided in which spacers 102 are affixed between substrates 130 and 164. Like Mitsutake, however, Anderson fails to teach or suggest, among other features, forming a space between the plate spacer and a surface of the first substrate so that a portion of the plate spacer previously in contact with the surface of the first substrate is no longer in contact

with the surface of the first substrate. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is thus also respectfully requested.

The secondary citation to Sakamaki relates to a method of manufacturing an image display medium and was cited for its teaching of providing elastic members at the ends of a plate spacer. The secondary citation to Iguchi relates to an image display apparatus and was cited for its teaching of providing tension to the spacers. These citations fail, however, to compensate for the deficiencies in the cited art with respect to Applicants' Claims 1 and 10. Therefore, without conceding the propriety of combining the art in the manner proposed in the Office Action, such combinations also fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention.

The rejections applied to Claims 6-9 are deemed to be moot in view of the cancellation of these claims.

Finally, with respect to the double patenting rejection, it is respectfully submitted that neither the art nor the claims in the '432 application provide for, among other reasons, forming a spacer between the plate spacer and a surface of the first substrate in the manner now set forth in independent Claims 1 and 10. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the double patenting rejection is also respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claims 1 and 10 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 2-5 and 11-14 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

FIRST SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. §1.56 and in accordance with the practice under 37 C.F.R. §§1.97 and 1.98, the Examiner's attention is directed to the documents listed on the enclosed Form PTO-1449. Copies of the listed documents are also enclosed.

For the Examiner's information, U.S. Patent Documents No. 6,278,066 and No. 6,571,464 and PCT Document No. WO 98/28774 correspond to Japanese Document No. 2000-510282.

Japanese Document No. 2002-197998 relates to an image forming device having a spacer 1020 fixed between a rear plate 1015 and a face plate 1017.

Accompanying this paper is a check for \$180.00 pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.97(c) and §1.17(p).

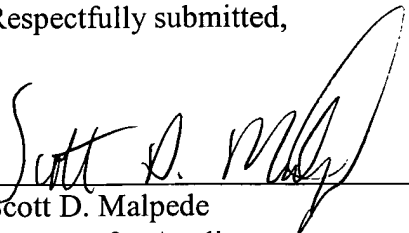
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Appln. No.: 10/726,536

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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